

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY  
BACKGROUND INTERVIEW BY SENIOR DEFENSE OFFICIALS FOLLOWING FIRST DAY  
OF NATO MINISTERS MEETINGS  
SEVILLE, SPAIN  
SEPTEMBER 29, 1994

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: I'm pleased that we could have this meeting here first on the day that we have a new secretary general in New York. People welcomed that this afternoon and he was approved. Secondly, the first time in 28 years that we have had a French minister here that participated fully-- like any other ally -- fully and vigorously in the debate.

Three subjects came up today. The first session dealt with the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia. The lunch discussion on the Mediterranean, emphasizing the increased significance of the Southern region in the post-Cold War era and a meeting of the minds about the need for NATO to pay a lot more attention to that region -- studies we're doing now and leading potentially to some programs. This afternoon a discussion of peacekeeping and the Combined Joint Task Forces. We're reviewing the progress that's been made so far and looking to the next report of the December ministerials to try to get all of the experience from the various things that have been done within the alliance down in Italy looking toward the establishment of one of these things last year. Bosnia being most important, quite clearly. Coming at an important moment with several developments: one of course is the separation between the Belgrade Serbs and the Pale Serbs, and a clear recognition by the ministers that reinforcing that as a key objective of the contact group is going to be very important in the period to come and leading to the fundamental objective that there is to try to bring about a peaceful settlement of this conflict, while at the same time reinforcing the unity that we have in the alliance on these fundamental issues.

And secondly this takes place against the background of the discussions this last week in Washington, the presentation by President Izebegovic which relates to the issue of lift. But the primary focus this morning was on insuring that those things which NATO has, over the last 13 months now, been preoccupied with in terms of supporting UN actions and how Contact Group actions would actually get done, and concern that what NATO says will be taken seriously, and a unified position on the need for there to be stricter enforcement of these decisions that have already been taken. I think we had a good discussion about requirements of doing that and of NATO having a strong position in communicating that to UN officials with an intent to get a responsive reaction from UNPROFOR when requests are made by the theater commander to respond to provocations.

There is no desire here to engage in efforts to use air power to force a peace or to engage in air campaigns, but clearly to show that NATO is taken seriously, that there will be, when there are provocations, responses that will not just be on a tit for tat basis, that can be part of the Contact Group effort to keep up the pressure on the obdurate party, the Bosnian Serbs, so that in the period ahead they will understand that their best hope is to agree to the Contact Group's map and the other provisions. I think that the ministers came into the meeting with an understanding that

they had to come out of it exactly where they did with a unified position and a clear demonstration that NATO's agreements are indeed to be respected. Do you want to add to that?

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Let me say just a word about the informal nature of this meeting. As you know, NATO has two regular meetings a year in Brussels that deal with the formal and fairly predictable agenda. This is the second informal meeting, the first last year in Travemuende, where ministers are encouraged to set aside their formal presentations and to have a real exchange of views. I've heard several people at the end of this day's meeting comment on the quality of this exchange. One NATO veteran said this was the best ministerial discussion he had heard in 20 years -- going to such meetings. There was a real dialogue here not a series of monologues, one after another, but a genuine exchange of views and I think everyone appreciated it.

What came out of this on Bosnia was an emerging consensus on how NATO is engaged in this process, and my colleague has described exactly how the ministers viewed that -- that NATO does have a stake in this, that NATO's credibility is at issue here, that we would like to see air power, when it is used, used in a robust way. That needs to be defined further and that is a job that NATO will be taking up. There was great concern, or some concern, about the possible strangulation of Sarajevo and the need not to look at this issue at any one time, but rather to look at a pattern of activity over time -- a suggestion that NATO ought to specify in more detail what actually would constitute "strangulation" of Sarajevo and other cities so that people who might contemplate that action would have a better idea of what would be necessary to invoke air strikes and NATO itself would have a better understanding of when air strikes would be called.

On the question of Mediterranean security, an important issue for us in Seville. The US Secretary of Defense said that as far as he's concerned, the threats to NATO have shifted with the end of the Cold War from the Central Front, in fact there is no "front" anymore in the central region, to the South. So the South is the region that faces today the most serious threat and it's incumbent on us as an alliance to take those threats seriously, to study those threats and to put them on our political agenda.

On CJTF, the last issue of the day, I think there was general agreement that we've not moved as rapidly on this issue as we had hoped at the NATO summit, a sense of encouragement to move ahead on this issue so that by the end of this year we can show some sort of progress, perhaps a commitment to a test bed or a demonstration of what a Combined Joint Task Force might look like or in some way to move this issue forward. But, as [First Defense Official] said, the real issue of the day was Bosnia, and I think the story of the day is an emerging consensus among NATO defense ministers about how air power ought to be applied in Bosnia. I'll leave it at that and we will answer your questions.

Q. (First Defense Official) said that there was no desire here to engage in air campaigns and yet you both talk about robust, possible robust use of air power. When the NAC meets, are the defense ministers -- have you given them any concrete outlines at all of what you're talking about in terms of between what you have now, which obviously you don't feel is adequate, and air campaigns? Are you going to give them any concrete ideas, or you just going to let the politicians take over from here, and you know what that will mean?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: I think there will be more to be said about it tomorrow. There is another half day of discussions on this and I suspect when the Secretary speaks tomorrow there will be more to lay on. The concern was that we've had a couple of circumstances, both on August 5th and September 22, in which when the air strikes took place, they ended up being less than efficient or effective. I think the last time, by the time the targeting got completed and the authority came from the United Nations there was an effort to strike a derelict tank which didn't impress anybody. The idea is that we're going to use military force in support of UNPROFOR's activities and to try to get the message across. We need to define more precisely what kinds of targets there are -- what we're all about -- so that if NATO is going to be using its air power, it's going to have some kind of effect. This is not something wild and indiscriminate, but it's to avoid any question that we're just engaging in something in passing or a mosquito bite. It's to see that NATO air power will be taken seriously and will have some effect.

Q. There's an impression, which I think many people are getting, that the Americans came into this meeting perhaps hoping for more robust action than they saw, and perhaps the French and the British and the Dutch came into this meeting and agreed to more robust action than they wanted. Is there a meeting in the middle? Have you got what you wanted?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: The object of a meeting like this is not for any one country to come out with what it came in with, but to come out with unity and with a sense of purpose of the alliance and that's what we've come out with.

Q. So you had to make concessions to get that?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: We got what we wanted. What we wanted, the United States, was agreement on the part, even though it's informal, but a meeting of the minds, on the part of the defense ministers of the 16 allies, that it was necessary for NATO to be robust, to be seen as robust in response to provocations that come in violation of the agreements we've already reached. This is not to reach new agreements, not to try to break new ground, but to say we already have on the books, on August 2, a series of significant decisions in regard to the exclusion zones, in regard to heavy weapons, in regard to things that can't be done around Sarajevo and the like, and we're going to stand up to see that those are enforced. And there was agreement on that. That was the objective; we achieved it.

Q. Is there any difference between the United States and the allies that have troops in Bosnia in terms of what circumstances should provoke more robust use of air power? Precisely is there the feeling that it has to be in response to an attack on UN troops as opposed to an attack that endangered Bosnian civilians who are in safe areas?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: The striking thing is, and it's not just at this meeting, we've gone back each of the times when NATO has used air power, is that the allies have not questioned, I don't recall at NATO headquarters a single item, have never questioned, going through with what we've said we're going to do. In fact, a point that was made today, I think at least a couple of the people who spoke, nobody spoke against what I'm about to say, is that if you get into a situation in which NATO does not do what it says it's going to do, that actually could increase the threat to

UNPROFOR by giving the Bosnian Serbs the sense that nobody is going to do anything and that they have free rein. So part of this, the point was asserted and not contradicted, is that by following through on what NATO has already said to be optimum, reaching for a broader mandate, not getting involved in broad scale air campaigns, but doing what we said we were going to do, particularly on February 9 and August 22, works precisely to support the efforts of the people who are on the ground.

Q. But by all reports of the forces on the ground, we're told the exclusion zones are violated daily and repeatedly and there's not been an air strike in retaliation for that violation. But in the cases when it's occurred it's always been specified as retaliation for an attack on UN troops in these areas.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: There is a recognition that over the last several months there have been a number of occasions in which things have happened that we had said were not supposed to happen. What we're doing now is creating a baseline, creating an assessment so there is absolute clarity within NATO about what we're talking about in terms of violations, in terms of enforcement, in terms of things like strangulation and then when there are violations of that or provocations to lay down the terms and conditions in which we're going to act.

Q. But this resolve was presumably there a year ago -- the 16 agreed to this resolution. So now you've got new resolve but you've still got chain of command problems. You've still got the possibility for political changes in New York. How is this going to change?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: We still have, as you know, the process which is what's called dual keys, in which NATO can turn its key, but the UN has to turn its key. But one of the objectives of getting this renewed resolve is for allied elements to be going to the United Nations in order to get political guidance out of the United Nations to the people on the ground so that they'll respond as well. Let me tell you about a recent success story, which is -- what was it -- two, three weeks ago -- NATO undertook to get back under control or removed out of the Sarajevo exclusion zone a number of uncontrolled weapons. We took a decision on what we wanted, we communicated that to the UN authorities, we set a time by which we wanted it, and on the day in question, the reduction of the weapons that were out of control went virtually to zero. It worked, and it worked without an air (inaudible).

Q. . . .fear of just one thing falling...is there any difference...any NATO countries, obviously...who are prepared to see air strikes to support both UNPROFOR troops under threat and to enforce UN resolutions such as heavy weapons in the DMZ? And are there also nations who would just like to see air attacks used purely to defend UNPROFOR forces under threat? Or are you all agreed that it's the whole range?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Nobody made that distinction today that I heard.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: In fact, everyone who spoke on this issue endorsed all of the NAC resolutions that are out there now. There's no need for any new resolutions and no mention of non-enforcement of ...

Q. No distinction made between protecting troops...?

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: No distinctions ... that sort of thing.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Let me ... excuse me. Let me go back to what is a basic distinction of how we do business. We have several things we're doing. We have Sharp Guard, which blockades the coast; we have Deny Flight, which suppresses fixed-wing aircraft; we have Close Air Support, which is a fully delegated NATO agreement--delegated literally all the way down to the pilots. So that if UN troops come under attack and a UN forward air controller who has the authority, which he has to get out of his chain of his command, can call up a NATO Close Air Support to protect those troops. He asks the pilot, and the pilot responds. We've fully delegated that on the NATO side.

The other thing is what we call a NATO air strikes, which relate to the decisions of August 2 and 9 last year, and to the Sarajevo decision of February 9th and the Gorazde decision of April 22nd. Those relate to either around Sarajevo weapons that are in the exclusion zone that shouldn't be there, or Gorazde, or to the firing of weapons from within or into those zones. Those decisions are independent of the target. For example, if a heavy weapon within the Sarajevo exclusion zone is fired at a civilian target or fired at a UN target, in terms of our capacity to respond, that's immaterial. That's an illegitimate use or presence of a weapon. Now, if the UN chose to characterize that in a particular way when they do it, to protect the UN forces, fine. That's part of the reason for doing it.

Q. But there's no distinction being made by any nation that's really protecting troops and enforcing the other resolution?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Didn't come up today.

Q. Excuse me, I'm just curious about something, too. Did Leotard indicate whether this is a watershed for the French or whether this is a one-time attendance based on the heebie-jeebies, or Bosnia and Algeria? Did he make any indication whether or not this...or did he attend because it's an informal type meeting or....

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: He seemed very pleased to be here and I have no reason to believe he won't come next year.

Q. But I mean, did he make any public indication one way or the other formally about it? And to keep coming?

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: He did not.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Nope. His body language showed that he had a good time. We fully expect that he'll be here next year.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: That's his choice. He will be back.

Q. The December DPC in Brussels?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Didn't come up.

Q. (inuadible)

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Let me say, in the original NATO decisions that we've operated, there are a number of criteria, some of which are public, some of which are not public, because they affect operational matters. One of the things that was agreed, that attacks should be proportional. How that's actually defined, it's not my business to say because that's an operational matter. But when we say it is not tit for tat, that is, attacks of more just one for one--tit for tat--but not an air campaign, that, I think, is as close as one wants to get to defining what we mean by proportional.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: If I can push that a bit further, and I...as this is, as Manfred Woerner used to say, I thank you for this question. It's a good question. I think there was some concern on the part of ministers that when the United States talked about robust enforcement, that what the United States had in mind was a massive air bombardment campaign, an indiscriminate, maximum use of air power to inflict a military defeat on the Serbs. And the discussion today revealed that there was agreement on this point, not a great disagreement. Because, indeed, what the United States meant, what the Secretary of Defense has always meant by robust enforcement, is something beyond going after the immediate offending target. If there is some tank that is firing, or some rocket-propelled grenade launcher, you don't have to find that exact weapon, and take it out. You don't have to limit yourself to that specific target. If there are other targets in the region of a comparable sort, you might go after them. You might go after more than one.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Let me point out, that's not just Secretary Perry's view. That's the NATO agreement, going all

the way back.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Yes, but that is what we mean. That is somewhat beyond the practice so far, and that is what other NATO ministers registered agreement with.

Q. When you talk about robust protection, do you only talk about air strikes, or air power, or do you also talk about more robust (inaudible) on the ground?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: No, the NATO decisions are limited to air power.

Q. (inaudible)

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Didn't come up. The thing was, we have agreements...

Q. ...I mean, Mr. Leotard talked about this ...

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Well, nobody proposed that there be broader NATO mandates. We said, let's take the mandates we have, and make sure everybody understands they're going to be enforced. And part of it was a response to what happened on August 5th and September 22nd, of various countries saying, well, this isn't what we had in mind. Let's get across what we really had in mind, with clarity.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: There was no discussion about NATO going beyond air power to use ground forces in here. There-- it is an accurate statement that if there is a provocation on the ground, you could respond to that either with the use of an air strike--and in the case of Bosnia that would be a NATO air strike--or you could use some ground retaliation for that, and in that case, that would be an UNPROFOR. There's nothing to exclude the possibility that UNPROFOR commanders on their own could take retaliation if they're fired upon, they could fire back.

Q. (inaudible)

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: No.

Q. (inaudible)

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Part of the aspect is to get individual allied countries to make clear at the UN what it is that we want.

Q. So, we're talking about a sixteen-strong approach, attack on the UN ....

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: By individual countries.

Q. By individual countries.

Q. Do you think that's going to make difference? When you've got problems, and we all know what the problem is, UNPROFOR won't play, so how are you--is what you're going to do really going to make them change their mind about their reluctance to have the kind of response you want?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: We're going to make the effort, and if this one doesn't work, we'll make another effort. The object is to get across that we have to have, if we're going to achieve peace, if we're going to get the Bosnian Serbs to accept this, to apply the pressure points, one of which is to reinforce what Mr. Milosevic has been doing with regard to the Bosnian Serbs in which we have very strong Russian support, as you know, through the Contact Group. Secondly, is the use--or potential use, or threat of use--of NATO air power in regard to these exclusion zones. And this is not going to be something that just for now, but over whatever period is required over the next several months. And the purpose of having this meeting is to give everybody a chance to talk it through again to understand with absolute clarity what we're talking about, to get the definitions clear, just as we did, just as (Second Defense Official) said, so that people would understand what the word "robust" means and what it doesn't mean. It certainly doesn't mean what happened on August 5th and September 22nd. And then, to engage in the dialogue with the United Nations to get them to instruct UNPROFOR to be responsive to that. In part, to help protect the credibility of the whole process so that UNPROFOR will be less at risk.

Q. Did you really (inaudible) what "robust" means?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Pardon?

Q. Did you really (inaudible) what "robust" means?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: I've already mentioned that.

Q. You mentioned....

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Without going into the details, yes, there was agreement on that. And you'll hear more about it tomorrow.

Q. What about the...what about lifting the arms embargo? Did you have a discussion on American views on lifting the arms embargo, or did you have any procedures for the countries...

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Well, it's no secret. I guess most,

if not all, of the European countries feel about the lift, and some of them repeated that view today. But it was also made very clear that if, indeed, the course that Mr. Izetbegovic has been talking about, and which he applied conditions, is going to have any chance of succeeding and being adopted, then there has to be a clear demonstration by NATO of continued pressure on the Bosnian Serbs. If you take simply the Congressional angle, it is meaningless to try to say to the Congress, simply on the basis of that one speech, that lift should be postponed. There's an integral part of it. If the...point was made repeatedly, if Europeans and others are interested in seeing the option of lift of postponed, then clearly this other form of pressure has to be applied. After all, lift did not come out of whole cloth, wasn't invented by the United States Congress, even, but is part of the Contact Group proposals of July 30th. And, in fact, more than one European country today reasserted a commitment to that Contact Group process.

Q. Leotard said that Britain had gone out of its way to -- to be -- to underline the fact that the importance of still listening to what the UNPROFOR was saying on the ground, the people on the ground were saying. Doesn't that, in a way, undermine what you're saying about the (inaudible) consensus in going to the UN, and getting governments to make it clear to the people on the ground what NATO's priorities are, even to undermine the fact that Britain--Malcolm Rifkind--chose to underline...

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Well, we always listen to UNPROFOR. We have a constant dialogue with them. There is, I think, an UNPROFOR liaison officer at SHAPE. We have NATO liaison officers with them. Hope I didn't give anything away by saying that. We had Generals Rose and DeLapresle to meet with the Military Committee recently. We have constant interaction between CINCSOUTH and the commanders there. So that there's a constant dialogue and a constant effort to understand their position, but also for them to understand what NATO's position is, as well. The object is to -- if the ideal is to come to an absolute meeting of the minds on all of these definitions. But certainly, we have an obligation, as NATO, with the application of NATO air power, to make very clear what the Allies expect to happen, and to make that clear at the political level as well as in military discussions.

Q. (inaudible) ... from that?

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Yes. There was no doubt. There was no discussion at all about removing the two keys--the two key mechanism--that is in place now. That is, there was no question of NATO doing anything with air power that would override or ignore the considerations of UNPROFOR, UNPROFOR

ground commanders. To the extent that, that there is confusion about NATO's concept of operations for air power. We hope that this discussion today and the actions that will result from this in NATO in the days to come will make UNPROFOR and NATO see this issue along similar lines.

MODERATOR: We have time for one more question.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: May I just say one other thing to follow up on an earlier point that (First Defense Official) made. There was great interest this morning in President Izetbegovic's statement, and his idea that perhaps the arms embargo could be delayed by six months. But there was interest in not seeing any opportunity presented by this opening squandered by just conducting business as usual. We want to take advantage of whatever window there is here to increase diplomatic pressure, try to isolate the Pale Serbs from Belgrade, and to use what we can use here as defense officials, to apply military pressure. To do that in a reasonable and proportionate way, but to make clear that violations of NATO resolutions will not go unpunished.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: See, this was a reason, to go back to your question, about the need to re-assert this today. It's to make sure that nobody--and by nobody, I mean primarily the Bosnian Serbs--has any illusion that if, indeed, lift is put off--and I say "if" because there is still a process in the United States that's engaged in this--so nobody's under any illusion that this means that the Bosnian Serbs cease to be under pressure. If there's not going to be lift--again, if there's not going to be--it's under circumstances in which the pressure's going to increase, not decrease.

MODERATOR: One more question.

Q. What is the process of analysis that Mr. Rifkind was speaking about? When there is a provocation, .... moving towards the .....

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: You'll have to ask him what he meant by that, if you're asking for a characterization of what he was saying.

Q. Well, I meant, what is the process that will be undertaken before NATO responds? You spoke about the operational aspects of it, but what comes when the (inaudible) people on the ground? What ...?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: I guess I don't understand the question. In terms of NATO, I think we went through it today, to have the discussion of what are the trends we see, reviewing what's in the various documents, to reconsider the

whole question of strangulation, to look at precisely what we mean by the kinds of attacks we take, the process by which we reach those decisions, what do we mean by "robust." If you mean in terms of how do the decisions get made with UNPROFOR, that was laid down a year ago, under the dual key system, which has, if I may say so, over the year since we started that, has led to--progressively--to a more effective set of decisions. Close Air Support, for example. The first time it was called for, by a French Forward Air Controller, the first NATO aircraft was overhead thirty seconds later. We patrol the skies 24 hours a day. It took the UN chain four hours to decide to use force, and by that time, the offending weapon was gone.

Q. Explain that.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Wherever it was, I can't remember. The second time, it only took 25 minutes. In terms of air strikes, in fact, on August 5th and September 22nd, it was not NATO that requested it--it was UNPROFOR that requested the air strikes. So there has been a progressive learning curve, we think, on the part of the UN, as well as NATO, as to how to get the job done. And we just hope the Bosnian Serbs are getting the message, because the determination is there to keep that pressure up until they settle.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: If your question was more about process....

Q. Yes.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Then I'll talk to you after. I'll tell you the concepts.

Q. Speaking of process, one thing (inaudible) clear. Have you all any target date on when the NAC letter will go to Boutros-Ghali, (inaudible) on how quickly this is going to be done--accomplished--I mean, how quickly to you hope it will be done? Is it going to take a month? Or....

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Essentially, what we had to accomplish was accomplished today. You'll hear more about it tomorrow.

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: And anything else, if anything by the end of tomorrow has to be accomplished it's going to happen very quickly.

Q. Well, by "accomplished," I mean, the NAC will be the (inaudible) communique, still, Boutros-Ghali, is that not right?

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Well, I think people read the newspaper tomorrow morning, I think, in New York they're going to get a certain glimmer of it. Let's put it this way: time's a-wasting, and any...

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: As soon as possible.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: If anything needs to get done, further, it's going to happen very fast.

Q. May I get in one quick question, and I apologize for being late--a computer problem. And if you've already touched on it, (inaudible) out of here. But you brought up in earlier discussions the question of Congress and what happens vis a vis Congress. Technically, if I'm not mistaken, there's now a law on the books that lays out a process for .... demonstration to seek lifting the embargo and then act unilaterally. Is there now going to be an attempt to seek a repeal of that law, or an overriding law, or some other action by Congress to negate that question?

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: The President's ...

Q. ...using as the carrot, if you will, the fact that we've now got this agreement today?

SECOND DEFENSE OFFICIAL: The President is on record as saying that if the Bosnian Serbs do not accept the Contact Group plan by October 15th, within two weeks of that date, he will go to the UN Security Council with a draft resolution. That is still the President's position on this. As I said, there is considerable interest in the United States as well as in other NATO allies, about President Izetbegovic's statement at the United Nations. And it is under consideration whether such a draft resolution that the United States might table might incorporate elements of President Izetbegovic's ideas.

FIRST DEFENSE OFFICIAL: Thank you.

## Perry to touch base with EUCOM

By CHUCK VINCH  
Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary William Perry will spend two days with U.S. European Command troops next week as part of an intensive overseas trip that began Wednesday.

After winding up talks with other NATO defense officials in Spain and France this week, Perry will give up his schedule to the European Command so that he can get a firsthand look at a variety of military operations, a Pentagon official said.

On Monday, Perry will travel to Brindisi, Italy, where he will sail on a Navy ship in the Adriatic Sea and observe naval operations in the region.

That evening, he will go to European Command headquarters in Stuttgart, Ger-

many, where he will meet with servicemembers who have been involved in Operation Support Hope in Rwanda and dine with his five U.S. four-star commanders in Europe.

On Tuesday morning, Perry will visit Spangdahlem AB, Germany, home to the Air Force's composite wing in Europe. He will "make a special point of talking to some of the airmen who are associated with the airlift" into Goma, Zaire, the official said.

Later that day, Perry will tour the U.S. Army Europe's major training range at Grafenwöhr, Germany, to observe various operations and simulations that are used there.

Before visiting with U.S. forces next week, Perry has a full plate of official business with his NATO counterparts today and Friday in Seville, Spain. High on the agenda will be the Clinton administration's Partnership for Peace program and the issue of possible NATO expansion.

France will send its defense minister, François Léotard, to the meetings for the first time since 1967, a move that has greatly encouraged senior NATO officials.

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has become involved in issues considered to be outside the alliance's traditional purview — the civil war in Bosnia and the concept of military combined joint task forces among NATO nations, to name two.

Perry will spend Friday evening with French Defense Minister François Léotard discussing U.S.-French issues in Fréjus, Léotard's hometown on the French Riviera. It is the first time since 1967 that France has sent a representative to the meeting.

On Saturday, they will go to Dijon, where both men will be inducted into France's Brotherhood of the Knights of Wine Tasting.

On Sunday, Perry will visit the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, and talk with some of the 80 students in the center's first class. They are mostly senior field-grade officers from various central European states and the former Soviet Union.

Perry will fly back to the United States on Tuesday night after visiting Grafenwöhr.